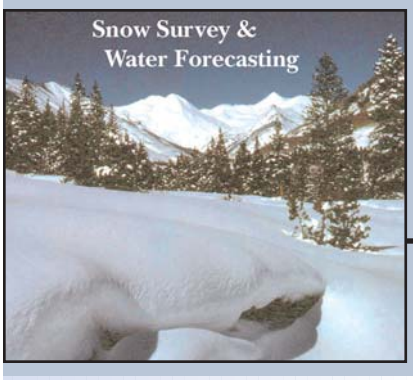

2006 Fiscal Report

Snow Survey and Water Forecasting

2006 was a significant year for the automated SNOTEL network across the West. After four years, the NRCS finished a complete upgrade of all electronics throughout the 700-plus remote sites in the network.

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to help agricultural producers and others care for the land. NRCS has six mission goals that include high quality, productive soils; clean and abundant water; healthy plant and animal communities; clean air; an adequate energy supply; and working farms and ranchlands.

Vision

Productive Lands -
Healthy Environment

Mission

Helping People Help the Land

"We produce a number of products within the Snow Survey and Water Forecasting Office. Within the next few years we will focus on the interpretation of forecasts for use at the local level, to improve the water user's understanding of available information and how they can apply it to their own unique situations."

Snow Survey and Water Forecasting Supervisor

The Program

The NRCS Snow Survey Program provides mountain snowpack data and streamflow forecasts for the western United States.

Common applications of snow survey products include water supply management, flood control, climate modeling, recreation, and conservation planning.

The Snow Survey Program in Colorado is responsible for collecting snowpack and climatological data using the SNOTEL *(SNOpack TELemetry)* system.

* The SNOTEL data is supplemented by data collected manually at snowcourses located in high mountain watersheds.

* Streamflow forecasts are updated monthly as the winter progresses, allowing water users and resource managers to plan for changing streamflow conditions and water supplies.

2006 Summary

- Early season snowfall during 2006 was generally above average for northern Colorado, while the southern mountains remained in a snowpack deficit for the entire winter.
- During the April through June period the entire state experienced a short but severe drought. What was originally anticipated as a good runoff season across northern Colorado quickly deteriorated into one of below average runoff volumes.
- By mid-summer it was apparent that the entire state would experience well below average streamflow volumes from snowmelt.
- Fortunately for some water users, relief did come from a strong monsoon which brought good late summer moisture to most of the state.
- By the end of September, the state's reservoir storage was 89% of average and 98% of last year's volumes on that date.

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service
HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

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November 2006